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WASHINGTON, D.C. - 20301

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HOLD FOR RELEASE
Noon (EST) on Thursday
February 10, 1994

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS

The Defense Department today released the Annual Defense Report to the President and the Congress. The report cited the reshaping of America's forces to meet the threats of the new, post-Cold War era as the chief accomplishment of the last year.

The report was officially transmitted by Secretary of Defense William Perry. It was prepared during the tenure of former Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and signed by Aspin. Perry, formerly Deputy Secretary, succeeded Aspin last week.

In the message accompanying the report, Aspin said "We have set the Department of Defense on a path to provide America the right forces, ready to fight, in this new era of turbulence and promise."

Aspin said 1993 was largely devoted to understanding the threats America faces in the post-Cold War world and determining via the Bottom-Up Review how to deal with them. He said the main work of 1994 would be to begin a multi-year effort to improve the department's internal processes, chiefly through acquisition reform and financial management reform.

As Deputy Secretary, Perry championed both acquisition reform and the need to remedy long-standing financial management problems.

The annual report described those financial management problems in blunt terms, calling them "clear failings."

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